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FM AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG
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INFO RUCNMEU/EU INTEREST COLLECTIVE
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 LUXEMBOURG 000327

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR EUR/WE VALERIE BELON, S/CG MICHAEL WILLIAMS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 11/13/2019

TAGS: PREL PGOV PINR LU

SUBJECT: LUXEMBOURG: COURTESY CALLS WITH FOREIGN MINISTER ASSELBORN AND PRIME MINISTER JUNCKER - STATUS OF SUPPORT FOR GUANTANAMO DETAINEE ISSUE

REF: LUXEMBOUNG 302

Classified By: Charge d'affaires Mark Biedlingmaier, reasons 1.4(b)(d)

¶1. (C) Charge d'affaires used the occasion of farewell courtesy calls with Foreign Minister Jean Asselborn and Prime Minister Jean-Claude Juncker to express appreciation for the offers of financial support from the Government of Luxembourg to assist with the transfer, administrative/logistical costs, and technical retaining of Guantanamo detainees held in a third country. As reported reftel, PM Juncker also hinted at a possible increase in funding for this effort from the GOL in fiscal year 2010. On the margins of UNGA, Albanian Prime Minister Sali Berisha declined an invitation for his country to serve as a resettlement point for 2-3 detainees. Management of this issue with host-government officials will transfer to incoming Charge d'affaires Trevor Evans upon the departure of CDA Biedlingmaier on November 15.

¶2. (C) Following are for-the-record texts of letters exchanged between FM Asselborn and Special Envoy Dan Fried following their working dinner in Luxembourg on September 17.

¶3. (C) FM Asselborn Letter to Ambassador Fried, dated October 12, 2009

BEGIN TEXT:

Dear Jean,

Thank you for your letter dated September 29th referring to the closure of the Guantanamo Bay Detention Facility.

Allow me, first of all, to reiterate our readiness to contribute to finding solutions enabling President Obama to close this facility. While it may, indeed, prove difficult to resettle detainees directly in my country, I am in a position, however to guarantee our help and to consider favourably your request to use the Findel airport as a facility allowing the voluntary transfer of detainees from Guantanamo to their ultimate destinations.

I would suggest that a small team of designated representatives get in touch to discuss all the specifics required to allow for such an undertaking. On my side the Secretary General, Monsieur Paul Duhr and the Political Director, Monsieur Georges Friden will be in charge of this dossier. They will be at your disposal. All questions of a principal nature will continue to be dealt with directly by me.

Permit me to conclude by expressing my deepest appreciation for seeking our partnership in this difficult issue, an expression of mutual trust and friendship.

Best regards, Jean Asselborn

END TEXT.

¶4. (C) Ambassador Fried Letter to FM Asselborn, dated September 29, 2009

BEGIN TEXT:

Dear Mr. Minister:

As you know, the closure of the Guantanamo Bay Detention Facility is a top priority for President Obama. The European Union and many of its Member States have stepped forward to join in this important endeavor, recognizing that the United States requires the help of its friends to resettle former detainees in order to close the facility. We understand that Luxembourg may not be in a position to resettle any detainees, but we do see an important way in which your government can help as we continue to transfer former detainees out of Guantanamo.

The United States is currently seeking to coordinate with its European partners on the transit of former detainees we are resettling in European countries or repatriating to their home countries where they will be released. This is an extremely important aspect of our movements of detainees out of Guantanamo and, I believe, it is an area in which Luxembourg can provide much needed assistance to the United States. Accordingly, please consider this a formal request for your government to consider allowing U.S. military aircraft to transit Luxembourg-Findel airport with former detainees on-board to re-fuel, change air crews, and as

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necessary, pre-position secondary aircraft to facilitate the voluntary transfer of these men to their ultimate destinations. We would of course inform your government and remain in close consultation on the specifics of any flights that transit your territory. The United States, including members of the U.S. Department of Defense, stand prepared to discuss the specifics of this request further with you and your designated representatives.

Your partnership and consideration of these requests is most appreciated and will signal in deeds a "turning of the page" in our transatlantic relationship.

Sincerely, Dan Fried

END TEXT.

BIEDLINGMAIER